

CITY OF VERONA
MINUTES
COMMON COUNCIL
July 13, 2020
Verona City Hall

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Verona Common Council held its meeting as a virtual meeting. The Common Council did not meet at City Hall, 111 Lincoln Street. Members of the Common Council and Staff joined the meeting by using Zoom Webinar. Members of the public were able to join the meeting using Zoom Webinar via a computer, tablet, or smartphone, or by calling into the meeting via phone.

1. Mayor Diaz called the meeting to order at 7:01p.m.
2. Roll call: Alderpersons Kate Cronin, Charlotte Jerney, Chad Kemp, Katie Kohl, Christine Posey, Heather Reekie and Charlie Ryan were present. Alderperson Evan Touchett is expected to arrive later. Also present: City Administrator Adam Sayre; City Engineer Carla Fischer; and City Clerk Ellen Clark.
3. Public Comment: None
4. Approval of the minutes from the June 22, 2020 Common Council meeting. Motion by Kemp, seconded by Cronin, to approve the minutes of the June 22, 2020 Common Council meeting. Motion carried 7-0.

7:02 p.m. – Evan Touchett now in attendance.
5. Mayor’s Business: Mayor Diaz commented that he wants people to feel free to reach out to their elected officials when they have concerns, ideas, or other feedback regarding City business.
6. Announcements: None
7. Administrator’s Report:
 - A Personnel Committee meeting to discuss the Resolution honoring the life of George Floyd with our actions, as well as City training and hiring opportunities, policies and goals will be held at 7 a.m. on Tuesday, July 14th.
 - An informational meeting regarding the proposed St. Ambrose Academy project will be held virtually at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, July 20th.
 - As Dane County moves into Phase 2 of the Forward Dane Plan, Staff has made the following adjustments to facilities and operations:
Library – The Library building will be closed from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. each day to allow Staff to clean and restock books. Curbside pick-up will continue during the 2-hour building closure.
City Hall and Public Works – Both buildings remain closed to the public for the foreseeable future.

Senior Center – The Senior Center is offering foot care services on an appointment basis only. Additional program offerings may be expanded in the near future.

Splash Pad/Fireman’s Beach – Capacity at the beach has been limited to 125 people. An online registration system has been implemented for pre-determined 2-hour and 10-minute time slots.

Park Program – The park program was temporarily suspended due to a positive COVID-19 test for one of the participants. The goal is to restart the program on July 20th.

Diaz asked if there is anything we can do in the future to prevent the spread of the virus.

Sayre replied the playground program participants are color-coded, so the same kids play together every day. In addition, they are playing non-contact games and other activities that facilitate physical distancing. Hand sanitizer is also available for participants. In the case of inclement weather, programs are cancelled proactively to prevent the likelihood of participants gathering under the shelters for protection from the weather. The entire program was shut down when a participant tested positive for COVID-19. Recreation Director Casey Dudley has done the best that he could to prevent virus spread.

Cronin asked if the City is doing a traffic analysis for the St. Ambrose Academy project proposal, and when it will be completed.

Sayre replied a traffic analysis was done, but the data has not been finalized. This is scheduled to be placed on the August 3rd Plan Commission agenda. The traffic impact analysis (TIA) will likely be done after the initial Plan Commission review.

8. Engineer’s Report:

- Well 6 Pumping Station Construction: Testing and pumping of the well and electrical controls began June 29th. MG&E has been delayed on the natural gas installation, which has also delayed the progress of HVAC testing. Asphalt paving, finish carpentry and well start-up is anticipated for mid-to-late July.
- Verona Area High School Construction Traffic Improvements: Most work items are complete. Finishing, punch list and some re-work items will continue throughout the project areas. The West Verona Avenue Signals at West End Circle and Nine Mound Road are planned to be operational on July 10th. Traffic will continue on the inside lane of West Verona Avenue until punch list items are complete. Other project roads will be opening in the coming weeks.
- CTH PD Construction – Woods Road to CTH M: Traffic is currently split to their appropriate sides and median lane closures are in place. After site electric, concrete pours, bike path, landscaping, asphalt milling, surface paving and permanent paint and signs are complete, traffic will be switched to utilize the median lanes so work can be completed in the outside lanes.
- Liberty Park Phase 4 Construction: Curb and sidewalk has been poured. Paving is projected to be complete by the end of July.

9. Committee Reports:

A. Finance Committee

- (1) Discussion and Possible Action Re: Payment of bills. Motion by Kemp, seconded by Cronin, to pay the bills in the amount of \$1,487,011.31. Motion carried 8-0.

B. Plan Commission

- (1) Discussion and Possible Action Re: Resolution No. R-20-028 approving a Precise Implementation Plan amendment to allow three live-work units located at 142 Paoli Street. Motion by Kohl, seconded by Posey to approve Resolution No. R-20-028 approving a Precise Implementation Plan amendment to allow three (3) live-work units located at 142 Paoli Street, with the following conditions:

1. The businesses located within the live-work units shall operate between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. for external customers.
2. The businesses located within the live-work units shall conform to the allowable uses of the Neighborhood Commercial (NC) zoning district.

The proposed Precise Implementation Plan amendment would change approximately 3,005 square feet of commercial space at 142 Paoli Street to three live-work units.

Posey and Kohl commented that this is a great use for this property.

Diaz agreed, and stated that small-scale, rentable home office spaces will be of lesser impact on the neighborhood than full-scale commercial.

Motion carried 8-0.

- (2) Discussion Re: A concept plan review of a Planned Unit Development (PUD) for a proposed four (4) story, 79-unit apartment building with 9,319 square feet of commercial space located at 410 and 420 West Verona Avenue. The proposed building would include affordable and market rate units with one, two and three bedrooms. The Council is encouraged to provide feedback and recommendations to the Applicant.

Diaz stated there is concern by a constituent regarding possible overflow parking spilling over into the residential neighborhoods surrounding the project.

Sayre replied parking includes 12 stalls on the northwest side of the property behind the commercial building, 15 stalls between the commercial and mixed-use buildings, and 26 others behind the mixed-use building. In addition, there are 80 underground spaces planned, bringing the total number of spaces to 133. A hard analysis of the parking situation has not yet been done. The project has several three-bedroom units, as well, which tends to create higher parking demand than smaller apartments.

Diaz asked the Applicant how this project will be different than the Velocity project, for example, where the commercial component remained empty for two years.

Sean O'Brien, representing Northpointe Development, stated the Old National

Bank has committed to stay on the site, with an initial 20-year lease. Through the tax credit program, investors and lenders will only give the developer credit for the tenant that is in place. Having that lease signed will allow them to apply that income toward the pro forma of the project. The other retail tenant will discount to zero, which will allow them to rent the retail space at a more affordable level. Regarding parking, he believes there will be enough parking available for the project. The bank will be a day user, and residential tenants will be able to park there at night. He would like to see a few more spots available, as he believes they have a good chance to fill the commercial space.

Cronin stated she has been contacted from constituents regarding the parking, as well. Overflow parking will not be welcomed in the neighborhood. Thirty-nine of the units will be two or three bedrooms. She asked if the tenants in the two and three-bedroom units could be assigned additional parking, and if so, if it would increase their rent.

O'Brien replied there will be a 1:1 ratio of underground parking stalls to apartment units, with approximately 53 surface parking spaces available, as well.

Posey asked why the commercial frontage is placed on Rita, versus on West Verona Avenue.

O'Brien answered one reason is the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) requires that at least 16% of the units in the project be three-bedroom units with private entrances located on the first floor. The main driver for this configuration is to provide access to the two drive-through lanes at the bank. This layout also prevents cars from exiting the drive-through and driving through the tenant parking lot in order to exit the property.

Posey stated she is concerned that constructing so many four-story apartment buildings along West Verona Avenue will create a corridor-like feeling when driving down the street. She would like to hear the Applicant's thoughts about designs and setbacks that might alleviate that feeling.

O'Brien replied there are setbacks within the project to make the four-story building look a little bit smaller, but the developer is also open to feedback from the Council.

Posey stated there is a need for the type of housing being proposed, but she would like to see what they can do to massage these taller buildings into the neighborhood.

O'Brien replied they are trying to create balance by putting the building closer to the street, versus closer to the homes behind the property.

Kohl asked O'Brien about the potential for a restaurant within this proposal.

O'Brien replied they have heard that people would like to see the current liquor license from the Klassik Tavern be used in this space. There is room for a

restaurant, but more parking stalls would be required for that. They would like to keep a food option on the site.

Diaz asked O'Brien to forward examples of other sites in the area that are similar to this project for distribution to the Council.

Kemp stated he likes the general concept of the proposal, however he agrees with Alder Posey in that he is a bit concerned about creating a corridor on West Verona Avenue. That corridor will have some good commercial space all the way up to the new high school. He would like to see it be walkable and bike-able. He would also like to keep a restaurant in this space; preferably something local, like the Klassik Tavern, as opposed to a national chain. He is looking forward to seeing how this develops.

Jerney expressed the same concern over a corridor of apartment buildings, and does not want to burden the neighborhood with parking issues.

Cronin asked about the parking requirements for a restaurant.

Sayre replied the use and number of seats determines the amount of parking required. Different parking requirements are assigned to specific uses.

Cronin asked how, in the age of COVID-19, an establishment would amend their premises description to expand seating into the parking lot if residential tenants need that space for parking.

Sayre replied it would be challenging because of common overlapping space in the parking areas.

The Common Council took no formal action on this item, as this is the conceptual review of the project.

- (3) Discussion Re: A concept plan review of a Planned Unit Development (PUD) for a proposed 161,050 square foot wholesale building and 24 fuel pumps located at the southwest corner of County Highway M and Thousand Oaks Trail. The Applicant is proposing the construction of a Costco store and fuel facility in the Verona Technology Park. Due to the size of the building, it is reviewed following the PUD planning process, which includes a Concept Plan, General Development Plan, and Precise Implementation Plan. The Council is encouraged to provide feedback and recommendations to the Applicant.

Ryan stated he has had a lot of positive feedback regarding this project. He would advocate the use of solar panels, and questioned the value of the gas pumps. He is also concerned about moving traffic in and out of the property.

Sayre stated some traffic analysis has been done already, and will continue as the project progresses.

Cronin stated she has had a lot of positive feedback from constituents, as well. She is pleased that Costco provides family-supporting jobs with benefits. She is concerned about the amount of impervious surface in the project, and suggested that some of the parking could be moved underground. She is also

concerned with the connectivity between the hotel and restaurants on one side of the road and the Costco property on the other. She would like to see walkability and bike-ability from one side to the other built into the project. She does not see the need for 24 gas pumps at this location. She is, however, pleased that this could be an opportunity for Verona.

Reekie encouraged the installation of solar panels on the building and the use of underground parking. She asked if rain gardens could be considered for stormwater management instead of ponds.

Touchett stated has heard positive feedback for this project. Regarding the amount of impervious surface, there are pavement alternatives available that absorb water. He is excited to see Costco coming to Verona.

Kemp stated he has had positive feedback from his constituents, as well. He likes that Costco gives their employees good health care benefits and offers a solid living wage. He believes it will be a good fit for Verona.

Diaz stated he supports the family-supporting jobs supplied by Costco. He would like to see more work on bike/pedestrian connections from across the road and to the downtown. He would also like to see some heavy landscaping on the property. In terms of the gas tanks, he is concerned about the possibility of environmental pollution down the road. In general, he thinks this is a positive thing for the City.

The Common Council took no formal action on this item, as this is the conceptual review of the project.

10. New Business:

- A. Discussion and Possible Action Re: Bar and Restaurant COVID-19 Support Program. Sayre stated Dane County's Emergency Order #7, issued on July 1, 2020, limits gatherings at bars and restaurants, which has created financial challenges for some local bar and restaurant businesses. In response to the Order, Staff has drafted a Bar and Restaurant COVID-19 Support Program. The criteria for the program are the same as the previous grant program, with the exception of the following:
- Maximum grant is \$4,000
 - Must be classified as a bar or restaurant as defined in the Dane County order
 - The business or applicant has not previously been awarded a City of Verona COVID-19 grant

Of the City's approximately 33 bars and restaurants, eight were previously awarded City of Verona COVID-19 grant funds. Staff recommends making \$100,000 in funds available for this grant program. The goal is to help out the bars and restaurants struggling due to the caps on the number of customers allowed in the establishments at one time.

Kemp stated a number of businesses have already received a grant. With the pool of money that is available, it seems that just about any business that wants a grant, and qualifies, could have access to an amount that is reasonable for them.

Sayre replied he believes there will be a limited number of applicants for these grant monies. The thought process when determining the amount of money available for the grants was that there are 25 businesses that did not get a grant the last time around; at \$4,000 each, that amounts to \$100,00.

Posey is glad we are taking the steps to move forward with this. She would like to see funds available for other industries. She is especially considering youth services, child care/summer programs and after school programs that have not been able to keep things running this summer. We need these programs in our community.

Sayre stated there will be a short application turn-around time, and the list of qualified applicants will be brought back to the Common Council at the next meeting in two weeks. We want to get the money out to the businesses as soon as possible.

Posey asked what process is planned for disseminating information to the public about the grants.

Sayre replied we will go through the Chamber of Commerce, post on Facebook, and reach out to the Verona Press. The deadline to apply will be July 20th, with applications being presented to the Common Council on July 27th for approval.

Motion by Posey, seconded by Kohl, to approve the Bar and Restaurant COVID-19 Support Program, with an application deadline of July 20th and approval by the Common Council on July 27th, using the same guidelines as the Small Business COVID-19 Support Program, with the following exceptions:

1. Maximum grant is \$4,000
2. Must be classified as a bar or restaurant as defined in the Dane County order
3. The business of applicant has not previously been awarded a City of Verona COVID-19 grant

8:00 p.m. – Heather Reekie left the meeting.

Motion carried 7-0.

11. Adjournment:

Motion by Kohl, seconded by Cronin, to adjourn at 8:06 p.m. Motion carried 7-0.

Ellen Clark
City Clerk